

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method and an apparatus are disclosed for providing specialized e-mail services to a sender, recipient or both, over a communications network. The method is composed of the following steps. On a computer operated by an e-mail sender, an online session with a computer at an e-mail center is established. The sender then sends an e-mail packet including an e-mail message destined to a recipient together with a request for a specified verification of e-mail service to the e-mail center. This e-mail is then transmitted from the e-mail center computer to an e-mail address accessible by a computer operated by a recipient, and when the recipient at least receives said e-mail, the e-mail center receives notification. And, in its turn, the e-mail center provides at least the requested e-mail notification to the sender. The apparatus provides the means for performing these steps. Options provided by this method and apparatus may include, among other things, obtaining one or more of the following: notification that e-mail was sent, notification that e-mail was received, notification that e-mail was opened, notification that e-mail was opened by intended recipient, notification of time and/or date of receipt and/or opening of e-mail, storage for future access of any selected notification information, storage of e-mail message contents for future access, verification of identity of sender, and verification of identity of recipient.